

## **AFFIDAVIT**

I, James Makemson, a Special Agent ("SA") with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"), and being duly sworn, depose and state as follows:

### **Agent Background**

1. I am an investigative or law enforcement officer of the United States within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2510(7), in that I am empowered by law to conduct investigations of, and to make arrests for, offenses enumerated in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2516.

2. I am a Special Agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), United States Department of Justice, and have been so employed since May of 2017. I am a graduate of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and the ATF National Academy. I was also a Deputy Sheriff with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office in Chattanooga, Tennessee from 2009 to 2017 and graduated from the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy in Donaldson, Tennessee in 2010. I have a Bachelor's of Science in Biology with a minor in Criminal Justice from the University of Tennessee.

3. As a result of my employment, training and experience as a state law enforcement officer and an ATF Special Agent, I have received training in connection with, and conducted investigations of violations of the National Firearms Act, Gun Control Act, Title 18, United States Code, Sections 922(g), 924(c) and others. I have also received training and conducted investigations involving unregistered weapons that fall under the National Firearms Act of 1934 within Title 26 of the United States Code.

4. I currently work in the Knoxville Field Office of the ATF. During my tenure as an ATF Special Agent, I have investigated numerous crimes including, but not limited to, felons in possession of firearms, unregistered weapons that fall under the National Firearms Act (Title

26 U.S.C.), narcotics trafficking, to include narcotics trafficking involving firearms possession and use, home invasions, bank fraud and identity theft. I have become familiar with the methods, operations, and schemes commonly employed by individuals involved in the violation of narcotics and firearms statutes through my training and prior experience; including previous cases I have investigated with other municipal, state, and federal agents. I have investigated cases in the Eastern District of Tennessee involving violations of state and federal narcotics and firearms statutes and, as a result, I have been successful in arresting and convicting numerous individuals associated with narcotics distribution and illegal firearms possession. I have been involved in the execution of numerous search warrants dealing with the detection and investigation of federal narcotics and firearms violations. I have participated in federal and state wiretap investigations and prosecutions. As a result of these investigations and prosecutions, I have become aware of various methods and techniques utilized by individuals within the Eastern District of Tennessee and elsewhere to sell and distribute illegal firearms and narcotics.

5. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other agents and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrant and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter.

6. The court has jurisdiction to issue the proposed warrant because it is a "court of competent jurisdiction" as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2711. Specifically, the Court is a district court of the United States that has jurisdiction over the offense being investigated.

7. Through my training and experience, discussions with other law enforcement agents, and my participation in other investigations involving firearms, including firearms, I know the following:

8. It is common for firearms and narcotics traffickers to conceal contraband and proceeds of contraband sales in secure locations within their residences for ready access and to conceal these items from law enforcement authorities or maintain other residences as “stash houses” as a ways to further their narcotics trafficking and avoid detection by law enforcement.

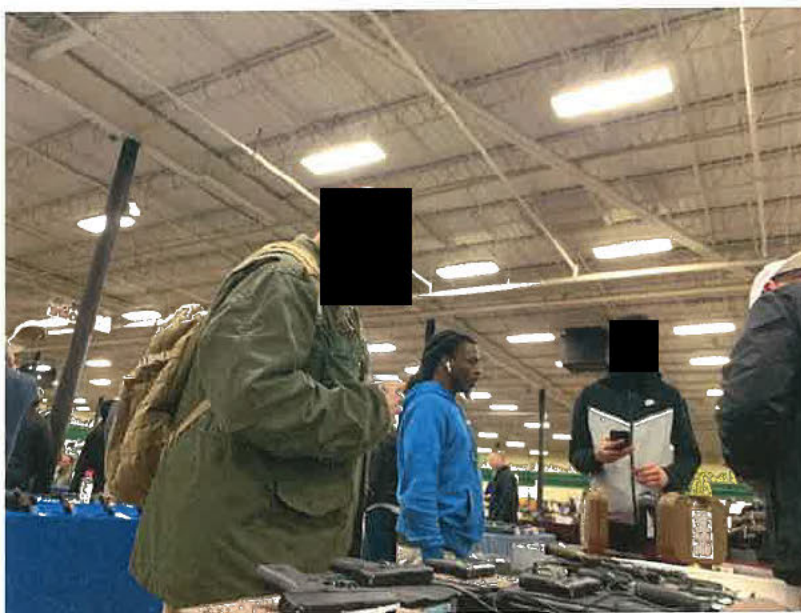
### **Probable Cause**

1. On January 30, 2022, members of the Knoxville Police Department Organized Crime Unit (KPD OCU), and agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) conducted a surveillance operation at the RK Gun Show, located at 5441 Clinton Highway, I-75 Expo Center in Knoxville, TN. The purpose of the operation was to gain intelligence and possibly identify vendors who are dealing firearms without a Federal Firearms License (Hereinafter “FFL”), persons prohibited from owning / possessing firearms, and known gang members. Officers were also attempting to identify individuals who may be conducting “straw purchases”, that is, purchasing firearms for another person who may be otherwise prohibited. During surveillance, ATF Task Force Officer (TFO) Todd Strickenberger observed an unknown male attempting to purchase three Glock handguns from a vendor which TFO Strickenberger had previously identified as an individual who was selling firearms without an FFL. *\*Agent’s Note\*- The vendor had approximately five, 6’ folding tables, consisting of various firearms for sale. Many of these firearms were of like model and caliber, and very few, if any, had any collector’s value. Furthermore, many of the firearms being sold by this vendor could be considered typical crime guns, for example, semi-automatic handguns and AR style pistols.* The unknown male attempting to purchase the three handguns was accompanied by another male, already holding three Glock handgun boxes. It should be noted that TFO Strickenberger did not observe where those three handguns were purchased. TFO



Strickenberger then observed the unknown male produce a large amount of U.S. Currency from his pocket, paying for the firearms. At no time did TFO Strickenberger observe the vendor ask the potential buyer for any identification, nor did he fill out any paperwork or documentation. Following the sale, TFO Strickenberger approached the seller, later identified as [REDACTED] (DOB: [REDACTED]). (\*\* [REDACTED]'s son-in-law facilitated the firearms sale, but the firearms were owned by [REDACTED]. The name of [REDACTED]'s son-in-law is unknown at this time.) TFO Strickenberger inquired if [REDACTED] or his son-in-law had asked the buyer for a TN identification, or if they had asked if they were prohibited from possessing a firearm. [REDACTED] and his son-in-law responded by saying that they did not ask for any ID or any questioning. However, [REDACTED]'s son-in-law did advise TFO Strickenberger that the taller unknown male had purchased firearms from him before, and he did review a TN identification at that time. Immediately following the purchase of the firearms from [REDACTED] the two males proceeded to another previously identified seller of firearms without an FFL. This vendor also had a large amount of newer model handguns, not requiring any background checks or ATF documentation. In a similar fashion, the unknown male who had just purchased three Glock handguns from [REDACTED] purchased another two Glock handguns from the vendor, later identified as [REDACTED] (DOB [REDACTED]). These firearms were also purchased with U.S. Currency, and at no time did TFO Strickenberger observe [REDACTED] ask the buyer for a TN Identification. Following the purchase, TFO Strickenberger conducted a brief interview of [REDACTED], inquiring if any he knew the individual, or if he had asked to see an ID. [REDACTED] stated he did not know the purchaser, nor did ask to see his identification prior to the sale. TFO Strickenberger covertly followed the two individuals to the parking lot, where they entered a green Ford F150 crew cab pick-up truck, TN license plate BCP0560. A records check through

National Crime Information Center (NCIC) revealed the above mentioned vehicle to be registered to Quintin LEWIS (Hereinafter "LEWIS"). After receiving the information regarding the vehicle registration, TFO Strickenberger sent a message to OCU investigators and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) investigators asking if anyone was familiar with Quintin LEWIS. Former Knoxville Police Department OCU investigator and current DEA employee Jacob Wilson responded that he and OCU Investigator Sara Morgan were involved in a long-term investigation relative to a Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO) in which Quintin LEWIS was involved. A photo, taken by TFO Strickenberger of the two unknown individuals at the gun show was provided to Investigator Sara Morgan. Here is the said photo:



2. Investigator Sara Morgan with KPD OCU advised TFO Strickenberger that the short black male, wearing blue in the photograph, was who she knew to be Quintin LEWIS. TFO Strickenberger conducted a criminal history check and determined LEWIS to be a convicted felon, thus prohibited from possessing firearms. LEWIS' prior felonies consist of Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon (arrest date: 05/26/2015, sentence date:

4/5/2016, Case # 15CR1712001), and Aggravated Unlawful Use of a Weapon (arrest date: 11/11/2011, sentence date: 01/24/2012, Case # 11CR2040001). This information was confirmed by a detailed rap sheet of Quintin LEWIS provided by the Chicago Police Department, to TFO Strickenberger on January 31, 2022. TFO Strickenberger also went to the known dealers and requested the serial numbers of the firearms which were sold to LEWIS on January 30, 2022; it should be noted that only five of the eight suspected firearm serial numbers were provided.

3. On February 26, 2022, members of the Knoxville Police Department Organized Crime Unit (KPD OCU), and agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) conducted a surveillance operation at the RK Gun Show, located at 5441 Clinton Highway, I-75 Expo Center in Knoxville, TN. The purpose of the operation was to identify and located Quintin LEWIS, who had an active state warrant out of Knox County for Felon in Possession of a Firearm. During the operation, TFO Strickenberger observed LEWIS enter the venue along with a heavy set black female, later identified as [REDACTED] (B/F, DOB: [REDACTED] TN DL# [REDACTED]), and a taller black male, later identified as [REDACTED] (B/M, DOB: [REDACTED] IL DL# [REDACTED]). Law enforcement observed LEWIS approach a table, which had several newer model firearms for sale and it did not appear that the seller had a federal firearms license. LEWIS produced a sum of U.S. currency from his person and laid it on the table. LEWIS was then observed taking the firearm and an extended magazine and placing it in the front pocket of the hooded sweatshirt he was wearing. Law enforcement then observed LEWIS and [REDACTED] taking pictures and/or FaceTiming other firearms from another dealer. Soon after, TFO Strickenberger approached LEWIS and [REDACTED] and escorted them to the lobby of the venue. At that time the remainder of law



enforcement inside the venue coalesced to TFO Strickenberger. LEWIS was placed into custody on the outstanding warrant, [REDACTED] was placed into handcuffs and detained, Williams was also detained by law enforcement. Once LEWIS was placed into custody, a search of his person was conducted and the following was located:

- a. A Glock, Model: 22Gen4, .40 caliber, semi-automatic pistol serial # BFAY839
- b. An extended Glock, .40 caliber magazine that could hold approximately 30 rounds of ammunition
- c. Approximately \$2,082 US Currency
- d. An iPhone
- e. A black wallet with LEWIS' TN DL and other miscellaneous cards
- f. A set of keys to include the ignition/door key to a Ford vehicle

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were released from the scene at the Knox Expo Center.

4. Shortly after the arrest of LEWIS, Knoxville Police Department K9 conducted an exterior sniff of a 2014 Ford F-150 with TN tag # BCP0560, which was in the parking lot of the Knox Expo Center. During the search of the vehicle, approximately 14.0 grams of suspected heroin was located, which was individually packages in numerous baggies. As well as an amount of suspected crack cocaine.

5. Approximately one hour after the arrest of LEWIS, the Knoxville Police Department executed a search warrant at 2612-A Gaston Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee. During the search warrant, several items of evidentiary value were located throughout the apartment:

- a. Approximately 263 grams of suspected heroin
- b. Approximately 62 grams of suspected cocaine
- c. Approximately 250 grams of suspected methamphetamine

- d. Approximately 425 grams of suspected marijuana
- e. Approximately \$29,821 in US Currency
- f. 20 firearms total: 19 handguns and one rifle
  - i. One Glock pistol had an after-market switch affixed to the rear of the slide, which field tested as fully-automatic

6. A portable safe was located inside a back room of the apartment. One of the keys on the key ring taken from LEWIS at his arrest at the Knox Expo Center, unlocked the safe. Inside the safe were several rounds of ammunition (.38 special and .410 caliber) two baggies of suspected heroin, a bottle of sealed quinine (suspected heroin cutting agent), and a Taurus .38 special revolver. Another key on the key ring taken from LEWIS at the time of his arrest, operated the deadbolt to the apartment. Also located inside the apartment, were several items of indicia with the name of Quintin LEWIS and [REDACTED].

7. One of the firearms located inside the apartment, a Glock, Model: 33, .357 SIG caliber, serial: GAS212, with an extended magazine, was purchased by LEWIS or his associated at the gun show on January 30, 2022; this is based on the serial numbers provided by the dealers from the January 30, 2022 operation and cooperation of the dealers.

8. The below picture displays the firearms, U.S. Currency, extended magazines, and narcotics seized from the search warrant:






9. Based on the forgoing, there is probable cause to believe that on February 26, 2022, in the Eastern District of Tennessee, LEWIS, a prior convicted felon, possessed firearms, did knowingly possess with intent to distribute fifty grams or more of methamphetamine, a Schedule II controlled substance, and possessed a firearm in furtherance of his narcotics trafficking.

FURTHER, THE AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

  
James Makemson  
Special Agent  
ATF

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27th day of February 2022, in person, by telephone or other reliable electronic means.

  
Jill McCook Jill E. McCook  
United States Magistrate Judge